

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-07 EB-07 OES-06 /102 W

----- 105063

R 030745Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3967

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 17808

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, KN

SUBJECT: COMMENTS OF KIM IL-SUNG TO RECENT JAPANESE VISITORS

SUMMARY: BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED IN CONVERSATIONS WITH RECENT
JAPANESE VISITORS,

KIM IL-SUNG REPORTEDLY DESCRIBED PANMUNJOM
INCIDENT AS DELIBERATE US PROVOCATION FOR POLITICAL
PURPOSES. HE PASSED OVER PROBLEM OF HIS POSSIBLE
SUCCESSOR AND ATTRIBUTED NORTH KOREAN TRADE PROBLEMS TO
DEPRESSED OVERSEAS MARKETS AND SHORTAGE OF SHIPS. HE
REAFFIRMED INTENTION TO CONCLUDE PEACE AGREEMENT WITH US
AND NEED FOR PARK REGIME TO RESIGN BEFORE NORTH-SOUTH
DIALOGUES COULD BEGIN. KIM ACCUSED IMPERIALISTS OF
PRESSURING SOME NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES FROM VOICING THEIR
TRUE SUPPORT OF NORTH KOREA AT COLOMBO NAM SUMMIT. IN
REGARD TO JAPAN, HE POINTEDLY DISMISSED IMPORTANCE OF
PRESENT GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT NORTH KOREA WOULD NOT
SUPPORT 200 MILE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONES AND THAT
UNPAID TRADE ACCOUNTS WITH JAPAN WOULD BE SETTLED

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AT ONCE. END SUMMARY.

1. SEVERAL JAPANESE VISITED NORTH KOREA DURING NOV AT DPRK INVITATION. TWO OF THEM, LEFTIST WRITER MAKOTO ODA AND FORMER SOHYO SECRETARY GENERAL AKIRA IWAI, MET WITH KIM IL-SUNG ON SEPARATE OCCASTIONS. BOTH HAVE SINCE PUBLISHED ARTICLES ON THEIR VISITS IN WHICH VARIOUS COMMENTS WERE ATTRIBUTED TO KIM.

2. IN FOUR HOUR EXCHANGE BETWEEN ODA AND KIM, REPRODUCED IN NOV 27-28 MAINICHI. KIM REPORTEDLY MADE FOLLOWING POINTS ON PANMUNJOM INCIDENT:
"INCIDENT WAS UNEXPECTED ...AND OUR SOLDIERS FELL INTO THE TRAP OF PROVOCATION."
US OFFICER HAD INITIATED INCIDENT BY THROWING AXE AND INJURING NORTH KOREAN GUARD. WITH "NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE SELF-DEFENSE MEASURES," NORTH KOREAN SOLDIERS WHTREW BACK AXE, FELLING AMERICAN SOLDIER. ENSUING FIGHTING WAS BETWEEN ONLY FOUR NORTH KOREAN GUARDS AND "MORE THAN A DOZEN ENEMY MEN." THAT AMERICANS WERE PREPARED TO PHOTOGRAPH FIGHTING PROVED DELIBERATE NATURE OF PROVOCATION. "THERE ARE NO GROUNDS FOR US TO PAY REPARATIONS TO THEM AND NO REASONS FOR OUR APOLOGIZING TO THEM. THE FACT OF THE ARISING OF THE INCIDENT ITSELF IS REGRETTABLE."

PANMUNJOM INCIDENT WAS POLITICAL DEVICE OF PRESIDENT FORD "TO DEMONSTRATE HIS STRENGTH."
"CONSEQUENTLY, IT WAS NECESSARY TO SETTLE THIS INCIDENT SKILLFULLY SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO UTILIZE IT FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES... IN THE HANDLING OF THE INCIDENT, THERE WAS NO CONFLICT OF VIEWS AT ALL WITHIN OUR SIDE."

3. WHEN QUERIED AS TO RUMOURS OF PROBLEMS OVER HIS POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR AND ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES
--"I AM STILL YOUNG, AND I CAN DO A GREAT DEAL OF WORK, EVEN FROM NOW. FOR THIS REASON, IS THERE ANY NEED TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS ON THE PROBLEM OF A SUCCESSOR? IN ADDITION, A REVOLUTIONARY DOES NOT DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF A SUCCESSOR."

-- NORTH KOREA'S "FOREIGN
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CURRENCY SITUATION IS SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT DUE TO THE WORLD-WIDE ECONOMIC DEPRESSION." NORTH KOREAN PRODUCTS WERE NOT SELLING WELL "BECAUSE OF THE DEPRESSION IN CAPITALIST MARKETS." FURTHERMORE, THERE WAS SHORTAGE OF SHIPS TO TRANSPORT NORTH KOREAN GOODS BECAUSE "THE BIG NATIONS ARE MONOPOLIZING SHIPS TO TRANSPORT GRAINS BECAUSE OF THE FOOD SHORTAGE."
--IT WAS NOT TRUE THAT NORTH KOREA'S GENERAL

ECONOMY WAS NOT DEVELOPING AT RAPID PACE. HE STATED THAT GRAIN PRODUCTION OF PRESENT YEAR SHOWED 1.2 MILLION TON INCREASE. DPRK WAS NOW FORMULATING "NEW OUTLOOK PLAN" TO REPLACE SIX-YEAR PROGRAM ENDING THIS YEAR.

4. ON NORTH-SOUTH

REUNIFICATION:

--NORTH KOREA WISHED TO HOLD TALKS WITH US ON PEACE AGREEMENT. "WE ARE KNOCKING ON THE DOOR, BUT THE AMERICANS ARE NOT OPENING IT." THERE WAS INCREASED PUBLIC SENTIMENT WITHIN US FOR CHANGE IN US POLICY TOWARDS KOREA. "WE DO NOT THINK THIS IS THE OPINION OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF PEOPLE."

--THERE WAS NEED FOR PARK GOVERNMENT TO RESIGN AND DEMOCRATIZATION OF SOUTH KOREAN SOCIETY. AS LONG AS SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT USED SLOGAN "UNIFICATION BY WINNING VICTORY OVER COMMUNISM" THERE WOULD BE NO DIALOGUE.

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5. ASKED WHETHER KIM WAS SATISFIED WITH RESULTS OF COLOMBO NAM SUMMIT:

-- NAM SUMMIT OUTCOME WAS "DESIRABLE."
SOME NATIONS HAD TRIED TO ATTACH
RESERVATIONS TO DPRK RESOLUTION BUT "THEY COULD NOT
EXPRESS THEIR TRUE INTENTIONS FULLY BECAUSE OF
DIFFICULTIES WITHIN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES."
"THE IMPERIALISTS" PRESSURED THESE NATIONS FROM
VOICING THEIR TRUE SYMPATHIES WITH NORTH KOREA.
"I UNDERSTAND THEIR POSITION."

6. ON RELATIONS WITH JAPAN:

--"THE IMPORTANT QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER THE
JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WILL RECOGNIZE OUR COUNTRY OR
NOT, BUT RATHER THAT THE JAPANESE PEOPLE SUPPORT
AND RECOGNIZE US. WE ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO THE JAPANESE
PEOPLE, AND WE ARE NOT ATTACHING IMPORTANCE TO THE
PERSONS IN POWER WITH JAPAN. PERSONS WHO HOLD THE
REINS OF GOVERNMENT COME AND GO, BUT THE PEOPLE ARE
ALWAYS THERE."

7. IN RESPONSE TO ODA'S MILD CRITICISM OF
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NORTH KOREAN OVERSEAS PROPAGANDA EFFORTS;
--"THERE ARE NOT A FEW DEFECTS IN OUR EXTERNAL
PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES. WE STILL DO NOT HAVE MANY
WORKERS WHO ARE WELL VERSED IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES."

8. FORMER SOHYO SECRETARY GENERAL IWAI SET DOWN
IMPRESSIONS OF HIS VISIT IN NOV 13 ASAHI ARTICLE.
IN ADDITION TO STANDARD PRAISE FOR NORTH KOREAN
ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS, IWAI MADE FOLLOWING
COMMENTS AS RESULT NOV 10 MEETING WITH KIM:

--KIM STATED THAT NORTH KOREA DID NOT SUPPORT
200-MILE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONES BECUASE "FISHERMEN
ARE NOT MONOPOLY CAPITALISTS, THEY ARE ALL
FRIENDS OF OURS."

--KIM RETURNED TO THEME THAT CURRENT DPRK
TRADE PROBLEMS WERE RESULT OF DEPRESSED OVERSEAS MARKETS
AND SHORTAGE OF SHIPS. KIM HAD ORDERED RESPONSIBLE
TRADE OFFICIALS "TO SETTLE UNPAID TRADE ACCOUNTS WITH
JAPAN AT ONCE."

--KIM STATED BELIEF THAT FUNDAMENTAL POSITION
OF US REMAINED UNCHANGED AFTER ELECTION, BUT THAT
"I WANT TO CONTINUE TO WATCH CARTER'S MOVES FOR SOME
TIME TO COME BECAUSE OF HIS CAMPAIGN PROMISE TO WITHDRAW
US TROOPS FROM SOUTH KOREA BY STAGES." END UNCLASSIFIED.

9. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL COMMENT: IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF,
FONOFF
NE ASIA DIVDIR ENDO COMMENTED THAT ODA AND IWAI

ARTICLES APPEARED TO CONTAIN "NOTHING SURPRISING OR NEW." HE DID NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT ATTENTION LAVISHED ON SUCH VISITORS TO DPRK AS ODA AND IWAI APPARENTLY REFLECTED SPECIAL EFFORT ON PART OF NORTH KOREANS TO PUT ON FRIENDLY FACE FOR JAPANESE. SUCH COMMENTS AS KIM'S STATEMENT ON 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE SEEMED PARTICULARLY CALCULATED TO PLEASE JAPANESE AUDIENCE AT TIME WHEN FISHING PROBLEMS WITH US AND USSR LOOMED LARGE. MILDLY AMUSED BY KIM'S PROMISE TO SETTLE DEBT PROBLEMS "AT ONCE," ENDO OBSERVED THAT SUCH WORDS RANG HOLLOW IN ABSENCE OF ANY SUBSTANTIVE NORTH KOREAN ACTIONS (AND PRESUMABLY WOULD SOUND EVEN EMPTIER IN CONFIDENTIAL

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LIGHT OF SUBSEQUENT NORTH KOREAN POSTPONEMENT OF DEBT RESCHEDULING TALKS WITH JAPANESE).

10. WE WERE STRUCK BY DEFENSIVE TONE IN KIM'S REMARKS. BULK OF ODA INTERVIEW, FOR INSTANCE, CONSISTED OF ODA'S DELICATELY PHRASED MENTION OF SERIES OF APPARENT NORTH KOREAN EMBARRASMENTS-PANMUNJOM INCIDENT, LACK OF FOREIGN CURRENCY, LACK OF NON-ALIGNED ENTHUSIASM FOR NORTH KOREAN RESOLUTION AT COLOMBO, ETC.--FOLLOWED BY CHAIRMAN KIM'S EXPLANATION OF "THE REAL SITUATION." WHILE DENUNCIATION OF PANMUNJUM INCIDENT AS US PROVOCATION WAS FAMILIAR, IT WAS INTERESTING THAT KIM MADE POINT OF NOTING UNANIMITY WITHIN PYONGYANG ON HANDLING OF INCIDENT. SIMILARLY, SUCCESSION QUESTION WAS CAREFULLY RAISED AND THEN DISMISSED AS NON-PROBLEM (ODA WROTE THAT HE HAD BEEN EMBARRASSED EVEN TO MENTION SUCCESSION SINCE KIM WAS "OBVIOUSLY IN SUCH GOOD HEALTH." ODA ADDED HE HAD BEEN AMAZED BY KIM'S HEARTY APPETITE AT MEAL TOGETHER). IN HIS COMMENTS ON JAPAN, KIM POINTEDLY DISMISSED ROLE OF CURRENT JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IN ANY IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS, PERHAPS SUGGESTING THAT ERSTWHILE NORTH KOREAN HOPES THAT MIKI GOVERNMENT MIGHT WOULD BEGIN TILT AWAY FROM SEOUL ARE GONE.
END COMMENT.

11. FULL TEXT OF ARTICLES BEING POUCHED TO WASHINGTON AND SEOUL.
HODGSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DMZ, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, BORDER INCIDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TOKYO17808
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760447-0966
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761273/aaaacleo.tel
Line Count: 273
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMENTS OF KIM IL-SUNG TO RECENT JAPANESE VISITORS SUMMARY: BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED IN CONVERSATIONS WITH RECENT JAPANESE VISITORS
TAGS: PFOR, EAGR, ECON, PLOS, JA, KN, (KIM IL-SUNG)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006